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Ye have taken away the Key of Knowledge

“Woe unto you, Doctors of the Law, because ye have taken away the Key of Knowledge: you entered not yourselves, and those approaching you hindered.”—Luke 11:52.

We are living in a pre-eminently practical day, when results are sought rather than doctrines. Indeed, in but few Christian pulpits are doctrines ever considered in these later years. Doctrinal preaching is considered obsolete, and has been replaced largely by what is termed practical preaching. In other words, the preaching of good works, has taken the place of the doctrines preached by Jesus and the apostles. The reason of this is not far to seek: talented men, of all denominations, in the pulpit and in the pew, are heartily ashamed of the doctrines confessed in their creeds.

The preachers, therefore, are glad enough to let these alone, hoping that their congregations will forget them, and especially that they will not ask them any troublesome questions respecting them.

As a result we have throughout the civilised world to-day just what the Jews had at the first advent of our Lord, namely, a form of godliness without the power. Our Lord's discourses and Parables continually bore witness to the fact that the Jews of His day, especially the prominent ones, were outwardly pious, zealous for God's Law, but inwardly -ravenous wolves and full of all manner of corruption. Our Lord upbraided the leaders for their long prayers and affectations of piety, which were entirely contradicted by their conduct in daily life; their selfishness, which would lead them to take advantage of the widow, to grasp for property, and which would bind heavy burdens of Law observance upon the weak and the poor, to their discouragement. Our Lord declared to them how they had made the divine Law of none effect through their traditions—more than this, had made God and His Law abhorrent to the poor and the ignorant by exaggeration. For instance, the Law of the Sabbath was exaggerated and is still exaggerated in the Talmud, which teaches that, to rub wheat between the hands and to blow away the chaff in order to eat the kernels would be unlawful, a violation of the Sabbath Day, because it would be threshing and winnowing on a small scale.

Taking Away the Key.

Thus did the Doctors of the Law in Jesus' day, by the substitution of traditions instead of the divine Word misrepresent the character of God and turn the attention of the people from Him. Thus did they take away the “Key of Knowledge,” for the “reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (knowledge).” Note our Lord's words, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus

Christ, whom thou hast sent”(John 17:3). In a word, God’s creatures need to know Him well and truly in order to appreciate Him and in order to have confidence in His gracious promises. Such a knowledge is necessary to a true worship such as the Lord appreciates, for, as the Master said, the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and; in truth (John 4:22, 23). Whoever, therefore, misrepresents the divine character and the divine plan is taking away the “Key of Knowledge” of God. This was the crime of the Doctors of the Law; which their hypocritical professions and prayers only helped to aggravate; for the common people, relying largely upon the holy professions and teachings of those leaders, were the more thoroughly deluded and the more thoroughly alienated from. God by reason of their professions of sanctity.

Our Lord’s words, “Woe unto you, Doctors of the Law,” had a fulfilment, too. Certain woes fell with special weight upon this very class but shortly after our Lord’s prediction. Very soon a period of disintegration set in, which affected everything, and every prospect of the wealthy and professedly religious class of the Jews, especially the Doctors of the Law. This led to anarchy and ultimately the destruction of their national polity, A.D. 70. True it meant dire tribulation to; all people; but as always, those most intelligent and in the high stations of life, must have suffered proportionately more in the, stress which came upon all the people in fulfilment of the prophecy—”Wrath is Come upon this people to the uttermost.”

The Jewish Age and People Typical of Spiritual Israel.

The Jewish Age began with Jacob, the Gospel Age with .Christ; the former was established in the twelve sons of Jacob and the latter in the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The former had typical sacrifices and sin-offerings, while the latter has antitypical or “better sacrifices than those”; the former had a typical priesthood in. Aaron and his sons, while the latter had an antitypical priesthood, called by the Apostle a “Royal Priesthood,” of which Christ is the Chief Priest and His faithful followers the under-priesthood. As the Jewish Age ended with the harvest in which our Lord was present in the flesh as the Chief Reaper, so this Gospel Age is ending with a harvest in which our Lord, as a spirit being, is present as the Chief Reaper, gathering the wheat into His garner, before the great time of trouble, the figurative burning-day coming upon the world in general—”a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation” (Dan. 12:1).

Is it not wonderful that to-day we find amongst nominal Christian people (Churchianity) conditions in many respects corresponding to the conditions described by our Lord amongst the Jews in their harvest time? To-day, also, we ‘find an outward respect for God and for religion — a drawing nigh unto the Lord with the lips while the hearts are far from him—busied with fashion, pleasure and money seeking. Now, also, we find that the people look to Doctors of Divinity for guidance • and instruction; that they greatly reverence them, and that the latter could have great power if they were in harmony with God—if, behind the profession, there was a knowledge of God’s character and plan, and if this were imparted to the people who, according to the Scriptures, are now famishing — a famine not for bread nor for’ water, but for the hearing of the message of the Lord (Amos 8:11). This sad arraignment of the pulpit of our day is

thankless and unpleasant task; but it is as proper to-day as it was nineteen centuries ago to show those hungering and thirsting for the Word of the Lord the real cause of their difficulty—to show that the clergy have taken away the “Key of Knowledge” and are keeping it hid, and that neither are they themselves entering into the knowledge nor are they favouring any others entering in. On the contrary, they hinder in a hundred ways the spread of a true knowledge of God and his Word amongst the people.

When the Key was Lost.

We should not be understood as teaching that all the responsibility of the loss of the key of Knowledge

belongs to the Christian ministers of today, neither did. our Lord charge the Doctors of the Law of, His day with the full responsibility. He pointed back to the same class in earlier days, saying “Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them” (v. 47). Our Lord seems to have arraigned the clergy as a class, and to have held the modern representatives responsible, because they gave evidence of having the same spirit that their predecessors had, even though they condemned some of their practices. Thus; their fathers killed the prophets, while they killed the Lord Himself and, persecuted His followers. Nor should we understand our Lord’s words to apply to every individual of the Jewish clergy, the Doctors of the Law, but rather that He spoke of them as a class, ignoring the few exceptions. Similarly we hold that amongst the teachers of to-day there are exceptions to the general rule—God-loving and God-fearing men, themselves striving to enter into the knowledge of God and to assist others to enter in. But surely these are a very small minority, and they are rarely heard’ from.

The Key of Knowledge of God’s true character was lost long ago, buried under what the Lutherans style the “dunghill of Roman decretals.” It was lost during the “dark ages.” Luther and some of his coadjutors (lid valiantly in striving to recover the Key, and at least got hold of the handle. But, alas! little progress has since been made.

The key, while recovered, is ,still hidden by a veil, a mist of superstition and false doctrine. Shall we illustrate this? How, we ask? Could any one come to a knowledge of God — a true knowledge, an appreciative knowledge, a hearty sympathy, a true devotion -- while still thinking of God as the all-powerful Creator, who made mankind for His own pleasure, yet before man’s creation prepared for the vast majority a place of eternal torment, manned with fire-proof devils and supplied with fuel enough for all eternity? Who that has that thought before his mind, who that believes that unscriptural teaching could rightly reverence his Creator as a God of justice and of love? In proportion as this cloud of error, this “doctrine of devils,” comes between an intelligent mind and its Creator, in that same proportion it will be impossible for him to really know God. whom. to rightly know would imply life eternal. Before the Key of Knowledge can be found and used, and access gained to a right appreciation and worship of God, this doctrine and other similar superstitions of the “dark ages” must be cleared away. We thank God that in His providence some to-day, Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile, are being helped to a knowledge by a message of the great Teacher, even as a little flock of Israelites indeed were taught of God and inducted into a knowledge and love of God, despite the conduct and false teachings and wrong attitude of the Doctors of the Law at the first advent.

It should be noted that our Lord does, not intimate that the Doctors of the Law themselves, had entered into the knowledge and were keeping others out of it, but, on the contrary, that while they were in a favoured position to supply the Key and to enter in and to enjoy the knowledge, they were not doing so, and in avoiding the knowledge they were hindering others who were in quest of it. So to-day we are not to be understood as intimating that, the preachers of Christendom have the true knowledge and are withholding it from the people, but the contrary—that they are confused, that they know not God, and that therefore the divine plan of boundless mercy for the sins of the whole world is hidden from their view. As a class they know not God — they misunderstand Him. But, instead of seeking for the Key and entering in, and seeking to assist others to enter in, have they not abandoned the Word of God and taken up Higher Criticism and Evolution, and are they not guiding those who look up to them for counsel in the same direction? Why do not these educated men of great opportunity awake to the privilege of their position and search, the Scriptures, and by full consecration of their all to the Lord enter into the school of Christ that they may be taught of Him, that they may find the Key of Knowledge and assist in putting it into the hands of those who are seeking God, “feeling after Him, if happily they might find Him,” but who are now being misled’: and misdirected? As our Lord said, the blind are leading the blind, and surely all will fall into the ditch. The ditch of that day was the time of trouble which wrecked the Jewish. nation. The ditch of our day is the approaching day of trouble, in which Christendom will be wrecked in a cataclysm of anarchy, according to the Scriptures.

Knowledge During the Next Age.

As the knowledge of God reaches but comparatively few of the human family during this Gospel Age, and few, therefore, gain the eternal life, it is of deep interest to all that the Lord's Word enunciates that it is His will that all men should be saved (from the condemnation to death) and come to a knowledge of the Truth that they may be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). If the knowledge of the Lord is a blessing to us now, and brings with it responsibility and great opportunity and blessings present and prospective, it is in full accord with this that the Lord here promises that ultimately all shall know Him, and all, therefore, have a full opportunity of attaining the blessings He is so willing to bestow upon those who seek Him in sincerity. Let us hearken to some of the promises given to these through the prophets. Isaiah tells us that the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (11:9). Habbakuk gives a very similar statement of the matter, assuring us that the earth will be filled with a knowledge of the glory, the greatness, the grandeur of the Lord (2:14). And again, the prophet Jeremiah declares that there shall be no longer need for every man to say to his neighbour and to his brother, "Know thou the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least even unto the greatest," (31:34). How glad we are that ultimately God's glorious character shall be clearly seen by all mankind—when the blindness of superstition, ignorance, bigotry and Satanic deceit and doctrines of devils shall have given way to the glorious, light of the Sun of Righteousness, with healing, restitution, in its beams !

"Whom Shall He Teach Knowledge?"

Isaiah the Prophet is caused to give a picture of our day in which is pointed out the stumbling of the teachers of our time. Symbolically they are represented as drunken with the wine of false doctrine, so that they "err in vision, they stumble in judgment," because Babylon made all nations drunk (Rev. 17:2; 18:3). These, the creeds of the different denominations, are represented as their table, at which they feed, and are declared to be full of uncleanness. Then still referring to our day, the Lord through the Prophet inquires (Isa. 28:9), "Whom shall he teach knowledge and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?" The question implies that few will be in a condition to understand the Truth in this day, and then the answer is given—"Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts." This symbolical picture represents the Lord's faithful people as merely babes in Christ, and informs us that even these must be weaned from their infantile condition that, as the Apostle suggests, they may appreciate the strong meat of divine revelation, and thus grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, advancing from the infantile condition to full manhood in Christ—Heb. 5:12.

While the intimation is that the Doctors of the Law at the first advent and the Doctors of Divinity at the present time will wield so strong an influence as to hinder the majority of those who are trusting them from entering into the riches of God's grace which are properly their portion, we have various intimations that the Lord will not permit this to be the case with those who are at heart loyal to Him. These will be drawn from the priests of sectarianism and from the creeds of the "dark ages"; they will be weaned; they will find the sectarian bed too short and the sectarian covers too narrow, and will get out from these conditions into the full liberty of the children of God, under the limitations of the Divine Word of revelation, which to them will be line upon line, here a little and there a little. As at the first advent the Lord found such a class and fed them, strengthened them so—although they were recognised as ignorant and unlearned men—they were soon known as talented, and their neighbours and enemies took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him—learned of the true God, of His true character and of the true hope set before them in the Gospel; so we have the Lord's promise that in the end of this age—notwithstanding the fact that the Key of Knowledge is lost to the majority, and that those who should have it and should be leading the way into it have it not and are turning the people aside from looking in the right direction—nevertheless our Lord Jesus, whom the Apostle styles the great Shepherd of the sheep, promises that at His second advent He will gather His sheep: in that dark and

stormy day.—Ezek. 34:11, 12.

He promises also that in this day He will cause His faithful ones, weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, to sit down to a table of His own furnishing, not filled with dogma of the “dark ages,” and that He himself will come forth and serve His people meat in due season, things new and old. Let us not only take this attitude of readiness to enter into the light of the knowledge of God and to be fed thereby, but additionally let us see to it that the strength which we derive from this strong meat of Present Truth shall be such as will build us up, sanctify us, that we may attain to that full knowledge of God which can be had only by those who come into heart-fellowship with Him through Christ, and which will constitute to them an evidence -that they are sons of God, taught of God, for such is the message of the Saviour, “The Father himself loveth you” (John 16:27). To all- who have hitherto been careless in respect of this Key of Knowledge and the blessings that are to be unlocked thereby, we urge that it is high time for them to awake out of sleep and out of darkness and to search the Scriptures and to enter into the blessed joys of the Lord to be had now through faith in His Word, and to be prepared to enter into the joys of the Lord actually very soon.

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His Afterward of Peace.

PROCLAIM ye this among the Gentiles; prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, 'all ye heathen, and gather yourselves 'together round about: thither cause (see margin) thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will, be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." (Joel 3:9-16.)

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow into it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." (Micah 4:1-5.)

IN the above words from God's prophets we have a most descriptive account of the great change that is pending with the close of 'this present evil world,' and the introduction of the "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness

In the former statement from the prophet Joel we have depicted, well over two thousand years ago, the very happenings of our own day. Who can doubt that such language is fulfilled in the world-wide military preparations unprecedented in the history of the world? There never has been such colossal armaments for the destruction of fellow-men—we see the literal fulfilment of the words, "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears." Well might leading statesmen declare that the conflict, of which all are in fear, (Luke 21:26) will mean the destruction of civilisation as it is to-day.

No human efforts are able to resist the mighty forces now gathering for the great climax. All the accumulated powers of evil and selfishness for past centuries, greatly multiplied by the increase of knowledge in this "time of the end," are about to meet in, conflict, with the result, as described by St. Peter in symbolic language—"The heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10).

The words of our Lord as He wept over Jerusalem, knowing of its rejection of Him and pending destruction some years later (picturing the fiery time of trouble at the close of the present age) come to mind—"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things' which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." These words of our Lord are pathetic indeed; they show how sad He was to think that Israel, God's covenanted people, were rejecting Him and His heavenly Father and were bringing upon themselves the judgments that followed.

Likewise, to-day, we may be sure that, the Lord has no pleasure in “the great time of trouble such as never was,” but in His wisdom, permits it, that one great, lasting lesson may benefit the whole human race throughout the ages of eternity. The words of the prophet Malachi seem appropriate here, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” The Elijah here mentioned would be the Elijah Class—the Christ Head and Body—who have sought during this Gospel Age to turn as many as possible to a childlike condition of heart, similar to that of the ancient fathers. These efforts have been unsuccessful as a whole, only a few have had ears to hear the message of truth from the Word of the Lord, as He foreknew and foretold, hence “the curse” must ensue.

In the words from Micah’s prophecy we have a beautiful picture of the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord established in the top of the mountains (over earth’s kingdoms which will then have passed away—Rev. 11:15), and exalted above the hills (the lesser governments of earth also subdued) and people flowing into it. This will follow the time when the Lord speaks peace to the raging masses of humanity and the opportunity is given to every one, living and dead (the resurrection taking place in due course), of learning of His ways and walking in His paths. Oh, happy day.

How different it will be when “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, for they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and all people will walk every one in the name of his God.” How we can thank the Lord that the end will be glorious indeed, and that the judgments now pending upon the world will really be blessings in disguise for all who are rightly exercised thereby and turn to serve Him with one consent (Zeph. 3:8, 9).

What consolation there is for the Lord’s people, even amidst the distress: of nations in knowing that at all times,

“All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” They realise that God’s purpose in calling them to the heavenly inheritance, is that they may be conformed to the image of His Son, and that the conditions abroad in the earth cannot interfere with this most important work in their hearts as they follow in the steps of the Master—fully loyal to His truth and cause in all things.

The closing days of the Church’s earthly career must indeed be severe and stormy—very similar to those of the early Church. Faith and confidence in the Lord will be fully tested and proved, but just as surely as He was watching over the saints at the beginning of the age and right through the hundreds of years since, so He is now very near to His true people, especially in the present “days of the Son of Man,” “the day of His preparation,” during which the first resurrection is taking place—each member in Christ receiving his reward at the close of the pilgrim way in readiness for the Kingdom work which is soon to commence, when “He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.” “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will not we fear, though the earth (present order of society) be removed, and though the mountains (kingdoms) be carried into the midst of the sea (lawless masses of mankind); though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains (kingdoms) shake with the swelling thereof. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her and that right early.” (Psa. 46:1-3, 5.) God’s ways are equal: storm or calm,

Seasons of peril and of rest,
The hurtling dart, the healing balm,
Are all apportioned as is best.
In judgments oft misunderstood,

In ways mysterious and obscure,
He brings from evil lasting good,
And makes the final gladness sure.
While Justice takes its course with strength,

Love bids our faith and hope increase
He'll give the chastened world at length
His afterward of peace.
When the dread forces of the gale

His sterner purposes perform,
And human skill can naught avail,
Against the fury of the storm,
Let loving hearts trust in Him still,

Through all the dark and devious way;
For who would thwart His blessed will,
Which leads through night to joyous day?
Be still beneath His tender care;

For He will: make the tempest cease,
And bring from out the anguish here
An afterward of peace.
Look up, O Earth; no storm can last

Beyond the limits God hath set;
When its appointed work is past,
In joy thou shalt thy grief forget
When sorrow's plowshare hath swept through,

Thy fairest flowers of life shall spring,
For God shall grant thee life anew,
And all thy wastes shall laugh and sing.
Hope thou in Him; His plan for thee

Shall end in triumph and release;
Fear not, for thou shalt surely see
His afterward of peace.

Let Your Moderation be Known to All.

ST. PAUL urged, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." (Phil. 4:5.) The latter clause of this exhortation implies that it belongs: Specially to the closing of this Gospel Age. Surely we find his words applicable to ourselves—yea, to all mankind.

Surely there never was a time when this counsel of moderation was so much needed as now! The very air seems charged with some exciting, nervous force. Good people, wise people, thoughtful people seem easily excited and liable to lose their balance at the very suggestion of ridiculous and foolish things. If any of us find such to be our condition, prayer should be made for that Wisdom which cometh from Above, to strengthen, establish and settle our hearts and lives in the will of God.

Excitement over some vagary of interpretation of God's Word may be injurious to ourselves, injurious to those with whom we may have any influence, and injuriously encouraging to the one who propounds the foolish interpretation whether such interpretation relates to the general interests of the Harvest work, or to other matters and persons.

It is unavoidable that politicians, socialists, anarchists, and others, attempting to forecast the future respecting themselves and the world, should be carried away with their own ideas, and lose their bearings and talk irrationally. God's people, on the contrary, are to be most moderate in all things. First, they are to recognise their own littleness and inability, and God's greatness and sufficiency. Secondly, they are to remember that God is ordering all the affairs and interests of His Church and also those of the world; and that all things are working together for good to those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose—to be members of His elect Church, the Bride of Christ.—Rom. 8:28-30.

Such consciousness of personal littleness and of Divine greatness should keep us very humble and restrain us from all boastfulness and headiness. We should be very thankful and very appreciative of what God has made known to us of His gracious purposes, but should strictly avoid every attempt to 'run before the Lord and to try to rudely break into any feature of His Plan which He has not yet unlocked. We should remember that any knowledge we might gain in advance of God's due time would be injurious to us. As, for instance, Mother Eve, already possessed of knowledge of good, by disobedience broke into and gained a knowledge of evil, in advance of the Divine regulation. The knowledge thus gained was expensive.

We urge our readers to exercise moderation in respect of their faith and conduct in all matters—including their chronological forecasts of the future. In our judgment, it is very unwise to spend valuable time and energy in guessing what will take place this year, next year, etc. On the contrary, we should be using the knowledge we possess—doing with our might what our hands find to do. The Adversary undoubtedly would like to attract us away from the things that we already know, and from our privileges of service, into speculation respecting those matters of which we have no knowledge. We urge that the Lord's people stifle curiosity, and desist from prying into things not clearly set forth in God's Word, as being injurious to them, hurtful to His Cause we are all desirous of serving, and tending to hinder the work of grace in our own hearts and in the hearts of those to whom we are the Lord's ambassadors and mouthpieces.

We urge that a knowledge of the times and seasons: connected with the Divine Plan of the Ages is helpful, encouraging and inspiring. Nevertheless, such knowledge is not of itself the Gospel. If every date of the chronology and every prophecy were blotted out, we should still rejoice in His glorious Gospel, of which Jesus and His great Sacrifice constitutes the centre, and our promised Participation with Him as His members in the blessing of all the families of the earth constitutes the circumference.

This is the Good Tidings of God's grace in Christ. Let us preach the Message of God's grace, and let our hearts be stimulated with God's Message through the Prophets, to the effect that the blessing is nigh at hand. Let our moderation be manifest to all, and let the fact that we know only in part and understand only in part help to keep us humble and moderate in word and deed and thought. Thus we shall best serve the interests of our Master and His Cause, and be most in harmony with the teachings of His Word.

The Wisdom of God's Great Plan.

(Contributed)

"He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied."—Isa. 53:11.

To the earnest Bible Student one thing becomes very apparent, that is, that God has known all things from the beginning and that His way and wisdom is infinite. The mind of man is often questioning "Why" and "Wherefore" but to those who know God and learn of Him from His Word of Truth, there comes the blessed realisation that He doeth all things well, and especially for those who put their trust in Him. Such can be still and know that God is God indeed, and that none can hinder His purposes. God is pleased to use men in the fulfilment of His purposes, but it is important that their services be in strict obedience to His revealed way, and all are obliged to be constantly on the alert to see that in them God's purposes are really having fulfilment.

God has created all things the world and all that is therein — and He created all for a purpose. Who that reads and believes His Word can doubt that God is good, and that no evil of any kind has place in the mind of the Infinite One. This is borne home to us long before we understand His ways or Plan. We may not at first fully understand the intricate ways of God's dealings with men from the beginning of creation, though we are convinced that He knows best, but God does not intend that we should forever remain at this point. It is the will of God to reveal to all, who truly desire, His methods of bringing to consummation what He had in mind from the beginning. The unveiling of His mysterious ways, reveals how far above man's thoughts and ways are the thoughts of the Eternal One.

God as yet, however, does not reveal or unveil His ways to all indiscriminately, but only to such as avail themselves of the means that He has provided, whereby they might daily grow in knowledge of these things. However, more or less generally, God's ways are counted foolishness with men. They discern not the light and continue to walk on in the darkness. But the light shines for all of an understanding heart, and with ears that hear now. But at last "all flesh shall see the salvation of our God" and then shall men know that it was their ways that were foolish, and that the Almighty and Eternal God was all-wise from the beginning. So we are constrained to believe that everything that has taken place in the world since it was created by God, will finally work out good, That is not to say that everything that has taken place has pleased the Creator, but He is so all-wise, all-loving and all-powerful, that He is able to make even the wrath of man to praise Him. Many a bitter experience that has come to man through disobeying God's righteous laws, will, through God's wondrous love, be turned into a blessing at last.

Leaving the earlier events concerning mankind, viz., creation of man, his fall, expulsion from Eden, deterioration into wickedness to the time of the flood, the saving of righteous Noah and family, the promises to Abraham, and the choosing of Israel and the Law Covenant, etc., all of which God in His wisdom has used as steps towards the accomplishment of His great Plan, which He inaugurated from the beginning, we come to the time of Christ. This was God's most wondrous and loving act on behalf of men, that He should send His own Son into the world in order to restore to man that which he had lost—the blessings attendant to reconciliation with God. And at what cost was it won? What it cost our Lord

Christ Jesus, to offer tip the sacrifice necessary for that which was lost, we can but dimly comprehend—“While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” “He was despised and rejected of men—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.”

It was not the physical suffering that made it so hard for our Saviour to bear; (cruel though death by crucifixion was), it was the estrangement from His loving Father in heaven which had to be borne, because upon Him was placed all our sorrows and griefs—all our sin. All men deserted Him at that hour. He could have borne that, hard as it was, but for God to hide His face from Him also, brought from Him the cry “My God, my God, why hast Thou Forsaken Me,” together with the sweat drops of blood, and the apprehension of which is shown in the thrice repeated prayer, “Oh God if it be possible let this cup pass from me.” It was for’ our sin that He bore all this.. He died the just for the unjust. God hid His face from Him then, because He cannot look upon sin, and Jesus was made sin for us. He paid its bitter price to the uttermost; yet in this dark hour God’s plan was going forward and man knew it not — “We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.” “If He be the Son of God” as He said. “Let Him come down from the cross” we hear the sneering cry. Ah, little did they know that they were really crucifying the Son of God, who if He had chosen could have there and then come down from the cross. Why did He not? Because He came to do the Father’s will—to complete the part then due to be fulfilled in His fathers plan, so that in due time that which God had willed from the beginning would be fully accomplished.

Remember Jesus saying; “Now is My soul troubled and what shall I say, ‘Father save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.’” This is what He came for: His mission then was to die the just for the unjust. When the disciple took up his sword to defend Jesus, he was forbidden. “Not so,” said Jesus. Could not the Father even now send twelve legions of angels to deliver Me? but how then could the Scripture be fulfilled, for it shows that it must be this way. Thus we see God’s plan again in the forefront. We remember too the troubled disciples on the way to Emmaus, and Jesus showing them how they failed to comprehend God’s plan. They tell -Him, ‘Jesus is dead, and we trusted He was the Saviour for whom we looked.’ “Oh, slow ones to understand God’s plan,” says Jesus in effect, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and enter into His glory.” What a joy to them as He opened up the Scriptures that they might see God’s plan advanced, instead of frustrated, as they had thought.

Then began to open up the ‘next feature of God’s great plan. The out-calling from amongst men of a people for. His name—the Church the bride of Christ—those to whom it is promised that if they are faithful in fulfilling the stated conditions, they will be allotted a share in the Kingdom of Heaven and shall be co-heirs with Jesus, their Head. So far as the world is concerned, and even with the majority of professing Christians this is still a great mystery. How vastly different, indeed, in faith and practice, is that referred to in the Scriptures as “The Church” compared, with what the world and Christendom of to-day calls “the Church.” Just how topsy, turvey the whole matter has become is daily, becoming increasingly evident, even to the worldly. But each day brings us nearer to the completion of the mystery, and then men shall again behold how God, as of:yore, has been working in mysterious ways -His wonders to perform.

The out-calling of the church is the work which has been in progress since Christ’s death and resurrection and is still going on. All are not called to become members of the bride of Christ and all who are called are not chosen—many are called, but few are chosen. Only those who are faithful, actually become members of the bride of Christ. The whole matter clears, when we see that., as soon as one is called of God, and accepts the privilege of becoming a member of the body of Christ, of the true Church, which is His Body, then, from that time he is on probation—his time of proving and testing which is severe then begins.

It is a great and responsible position to which we are called. Whole-hearted loyalty is therefore required; half measures are not acceptable — “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” Christ is the Rock upon which the Church is built; He is the great example whom the called are to follow. Those who prove faithful and at last are chosen, are exalted to a position which is described as sitting with Him (Christ) in His throne. To ever become worthy of such a place of ourselves, would be attempting the impossible, but God in His wisdom, love and mercy has provided the merit for our lack, in Jesus our Redeemer and Lord. Nevertheless in Him we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Our probation does not end until we finish our earthly course in death. -We must never cease ourselves to have fully apprehended, but must be pressing on towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

It is a narrow way. The servants are not above their Lord, therefore we cannot expect the world's friendship which is enmity with God. “Woe unto you when all shall speak well of you” but “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake and when they shall separate you from their company.” • Jesus said, “I came not to send peace; on earth but a sword or division.. From henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three. Father against son and son against father,” and so on. He was not then referring to the Universal Kingdom of Peace which will eventually be on earth as God's great plan progresses to completion; but to the time of the out-calling of His Church, showing how its members could not expect peace in earthly things but rather division, being strangers and pilgrims on earth, having no continuing (or abiding) city, but seeking one to come.

However, the peace of God which this world can neither give, nor take away, is always with the -faithful. Troubled perhaps on every side: yet not distressed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken. To suffer is necessary in order to share His glory. It was the way the Master went, should not the servant tread it still. But you say, How can a God of love take pleasure in suffering of any kind: only in this, that it is necessary for a time to work out His infinite plan, which at last when all is unfolded shall leave men speechless with wonder at its wisdom. Can we doubt that God would keenly feel the agony of His dear Son as He cried, “If it be possible let this cup pass from Me.” But it could: not be lifted and God's will, be carried out. God knew His beloved Son would eventually see the cost of the suffering- to have been well worth while, and that He would not have had it otherwise. The time' would come when He would see of the travail of His soul and would be satisfied. And to those who are granted by grace a part with Him in the sufferings of this present time and the glory to follow, let us remember that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us as God's great plan advances even to the consummation of all which He had in mind from the beginning.

Notices.

“The Offerings for Sin.”—The booklet by this title which took the place of August “Peoples Paper,” is now available for general use. Supplied at 3d. per copy, 10d. per half dozen, and 1/6 per dozen, post paid. Those unable to purchase may obtain copies free, upon request.

“The Ten Camels.”—These Bible Stories are now ready, as announced; in another part of this issue. While it was our intention to have it bound in both cloth and paper covers, the requests for the latter were so few that the cloth binding has been used almost exclusively—only a few are in paper covers and these not being so clean in the printing will be available at 9d. per copy, while they last.

Proposed Tune Book.—Our English brethren indicate the possibility of producing a tune book at reasonable cost to suit the Bible Students Hymnal of words, and any of our friends interested are asked to communicate, stating whether they would take one or more of these.

The hymnal of words, as announced previously, is a fine collection of hymns, 462 in number and comprising practically all in the ‘original “Dawn” and “Christian Hymns.” as well as many selected additions. Bound in limp cloth and cloth board covers. the prices are 1/6 and 1/9 per copy, respectively, post paid.

Adelaide Class Address.—Those friends interested in the Adelaide Class meetings will note the new address under the heading “Bible Class Assemblies.”

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“For in that He died, He died for sin once, . . . Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed for sin.
“—Rom. 6:10-11.

This Booklet is in lieu of August, 1939, issue The Offerings for Sin

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him, For in that He died, He died unto (for) sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:9-11.

THE subject of the offerings for sin is one by which we are reminded at once of the terrible consequences as a result of “sin entering into the world, and death by sin,” and while our purpose is not to dwell particularly on the introduction of sin into the world and examine the dire results therefrom, but rather to emphasise the wonderful provision to take away sin from off the face of the whole earth, yet it is fitting to note the extensiveness of this evil, for by so doing, we realise more fully the effectiveness of the remedy God has provided, as expressed by the little poem:

“To wipe away of sin each trace,
To, make of earth a perfect place,
With glory everywhere.”

While, then, our text’ in the. 6th of Romans explains in few words the offerings for sin, in the previous chapters of this same Epistle we find’ that St.’Paul covers the whole. subject of the introduction of sin, and how God, without violating’ one of His great attributes can effect a lasting remedy. that will not only bring blessing to the human race, but also. great glory and honor to His holy name throughout all eternity.

In the first chapter of. this Epistle, Paul shows how quickly the entrance of sin into the world’ brought man down to the condition of the brute beasts—”When they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations. and their foolish hearts were darkened; for the invisible things of Him from the creation of, the world are clearly seen, being understood by, the things that are made, even His. eternal power and God head; so that they are without excuse.” By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. Yes, “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” All were not put on trial similarly to Adam, yet “when they knew God they glorified Him not as God”; “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”

All the World Guilty before God.

Paul then passes on to Israel and reviews their standing before God under the Law Covenant, yet, while stressing the great advantages that they had over the other nations of the world, in being God’s chosen people and receiving His laws through Moses, the typical mediator, when he comes to the question of their salvation from sink and death and hope of eternal life, he asks:—”What then? Are we better than they?”—are we, better than the Gentile nations whom God allowed to go their own ways? “No, in no wise: for we have proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; as it is written, There, is none righteous, no, not one.”

The Apostle, in proving the point that “all the world stands guilty before God,” teaches the same lesson as that revealed in the vision shown to St, John as related in Revelation, chapter 5. St. John beheld a sealed book in the hand of Him that’ sat on the throne, and the question was asked by the angel, “Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof ?” And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the book,. and to look thereon and John wept much because of this. The following

scene also agrees so fully with Paul's statement:—"And one of the elders said unto me, weep not, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,. hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."

Jesus the Ransom.

Here we have revealed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," agreeing with Paul's words in Romans 3, where he declares that, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Here, then, is God's wondrous means of providing salvation for a world of sinners lost and ruined by the fall—the giving of His only begotten Son to be the ransom or corresponding price for all mankind condemned in Adam. This matter is expounded fully in Romans, chapters 4 and 5, then when we come to the 6th chapter we find not only the foundation, first principles of our faith and hope brought out, but also the deeper, spiritual truths that pertain to the outworking of this wonderful plan of salvation.

The Ransom, Not the Sin-Offering.

It is one thing to appreciate very fully God's great gift of our Lord Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world, but it is quite another to understand, to grasp and rejoice in God's method of taking away the world's sins by means of that satisfactory price provided by His dear Son.

It is respecting the application or use of the ransom price to which our subject particularly applies, and it helps greatly if we keep in mind the fact that the Sin-offerings signify how God, in His wisdom and good pleasure, has seen fit to make application of the blood of Christ so that each and every member of the human race may, in due time, receive all the benefits intended, though in God's plan, the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world.

God's Plan Accomplished-In Due Time.

How often we have it brought out in the Plan of the Ages that God has a due time for everything, so this term, "in due time," explains many difficulties, not only when we are first coming to a knowledge and appreciation of the truth, but also in regard to the deep things of God, of which the Sin-offerings is one.

The statement of John the Baptist as he introduced his disciples to the Lord is very familiar—"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," and at first thought one might say, "Yes, Jesus took away the sins of the world when He proved faithful unto death at Calvary;" but not so. It is one thing to provide a price that can release the world, from its sins, but quite another to so apply that valuable thing to Justice that the condemnation is lifted. Yet how true John's words were—"The Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,"—that will take away their sins, in due time.

We have the same thought in John's Gospel respecting our Lord—"That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Again we must say, not so at the present time; the Lord has not lightened every man; yet the statement is true. "The true light that lighteth every man"—that will lighten, in due time, every man that cometh into the world.

Again, we have the statement of Paul's in 1 Tim. 2:6 —"The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for

all, to be testified in due time.” Does not Paul imply here that Jesus paid to Justice a ransom or corresponding price on behalf of all mankind at His first advent? No, we do not think that is his thought. He had just previously stated, “God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”—in due time. Just so his thought respecting our Lord’s sacrifice seems to be—Christ Jesus gave Himself to be a ransom for all, in due time; and which would also be testified or revealed to all in due time.

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth.

It may be asked, how do we know that this is the true understanding of the matter? It is from the Scriptures as a whole that we find both typical and antitypical sin-offerings agreeing with this thought, though they are often not clearly understood by the brethren. There is a tendency with some, when they come to appreciate the great sacrifice of Christ at Calvary, to conclude that all sacrificing for sin was finished there; that by some means the corresponding price was paid to Justice on behalf of all mankind, and that it is really dishonoring His precious blood to think of further offerings for sin during this Gospel Age.

However, on this, as on all other matters of faith, the Scriptures alone must be our guide, and it is as we go to both Old and New Testaments that we find the subject of the Sin-offerings clearly expounded, which, when rightly understood, brings additional honor and glory to Christ and the great plan of redemption of which He is the centre.

It is necessary to add that there is no thought of ransom price in any other offerings for sin, than that of Christ, our Head. As stated previously, our subject has to do with the application of the valuable thing, the ransom price, so that eventually, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Type and Antitype.

Let us examine some of the helpful types of the Old Testament, which we may be sure have their fulfilment in the antitypes or realities, commencing with Christ. At the Passover in Egypt, this was a means whereby the children of Israel were delivered out of that land, and the shedding of the blood of a lamb was the central picture of the whole matter. At the appointed time a lamb without blemish was slain by each household of Israel, and its blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the houses. This was for the protection of certain individuals only, in each house—the firstborns. No others were in danger of death during that terrible night when the firstborns in every Egyptian household were destroyed. It is well known that the lamb in Egypt pictured our Lord Jesus—the lamb of God—and while that type had special reference to the ransom, or corresponding price, the fact that the application, of the blood was made in the interests of the firstborns only, is most important. This shows the application of the blood of the Lamb of God during the whole of this Gospel Age; it is only for the covering of the firstborn class; no others have had the blood applied for them; justice is satisfied only for the few—”the church of the firstborns whose names are written in heaven.”

What a wonderful thing this is, that God should determine to choose out some from the human race and give them the privilege and benefits of being covered with the blood of Christ far in advance of the multitudes of mankind, and for a very special purpose, over and above anything we could have thought or asked. So, we see in this important type, the truth of the mystery hid from ages and dispensations, but now, during this Gospel Age, made manifest to the saints.

It is, however, from the further types of Israel’s day of atonement that we find the better sacrifices for sin so completely, so beautifully and so clearly pictured, and it is to these that the great Apostle Paul makes special reference when expounding the realities, particularly in his Epistle to the Hebrews. How fitting

that the Lord should give the Hebrew Christians these precious truths first of all, that they may realise how fully their law arrangements were shadows of good things to come, and as we also come into Christ, it is our privilege to be fully informed of these matters, if we are ready to receive that which the Lord has in store for us.

Increasing. Light.

Have we ever felt, dear friends, in looking back over past years, how little we had understood God and His plan prior to receiving the truth in a general way. No doubt we have; but have we also realised how little we have understood and appreciated God and His plan, even after receiving the truth in a general way? If so, we are in a happy condition, because our hearts and minds so filled with the greatness and goodness of God, will be ready to receive more and more of His spiritual truths for our upbuilding as the under-priests in our special order or profession, of which our Lord is the great High Priest. When we have gotten rid of the errors of the dark ages and come to love the Lord and His truth with pure hearts, we are only beginning to know and appreciate something of the goodness of our heavenly Father. On the night in which He instituted the Memorial of His death, our dear Lord said, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." What a thought—"to know Thee, the only true God." Yes, and to obey Him; this is life eternal. And as we come to know God and His wonderful plan, we find over and over again, "still there's more to follow." This is particularly so in the subject of the offerings for sin, in which some of the grandest and deepest truths of the plan of God are to be found. How the noble Apostle labored to expound these things for us, and let us endeavour to trace his thoughts, as he brings out the realities from the types of Israel's Atonement Day.

Typical Atonement Day.

The thought in the word "Atonement" is in itself a beautiful one. It signifies, reconciliation; and so we find on that 24-hour day, set apart once a year, Israel was typically reconciled to God. And why be typically reconciled every year;

why did not this reconciliation last? Because those offerings for sin were typical only, just as was the day—"In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Heb. 10:3, 4.). No, indeed. But why does the Apostle so clearly and definitely say, "the blood of bulls and of goats"? Because in the type both animals must be slain to complete the sin-offerings, and this pictures the important antitype.

Typical Sin-Offering-Bullock.

In the 16th chapter of Leviticus, we have Israel's day of atonement offerings for sin so fully explained. Aaron, the high priest, was instructed to be clothed in the holy linen garments, which in themselves are very significant, and the first of the sin-offerings is a young bullock —'which is for himself, to make atonement for himself and for his house." It will be remembered that in the type there were the high priest, the under-priests, and additionally the Levites from, whom the priests were selected; so this bullock of the sin-offering was sacrificed on behalf of these only — himself — the members of the priesthood and his house — the tribe of Levi.

The account in Lev. 16:11-14 reads—"And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail; And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: and he shall take of the blood .of the bullock, and sprinkle it

with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.” Here, we have a most wonderful picture of what was completed in reality, forty days after the death of our Lord, not within the precincts of an earthly tabernacle, “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”—Heb. 9:24.

Antitypical Sin-Offering--Jesus.

Undoubtedly, the bullock in this typical sin-offering pictured our Lord Jesus as He presented Himself a perfect, living sacrifice to God, at Jordan. There, He was killed, in the sense that His humanity was placed on the altar—dead to His own will—fully submitted to God’s will. As the high priest passed under the vail dividing the Holy from the Most Holy, we have represented the actual death of our Lord at Calvary. The incense being sprinkled on the coals of fire before the mercy seat would picture the acceptableness of Christ’s sacrifice before the heavenly propitiatory; and then follows the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat, not for Israel as a whole; no, but for himself and his house. Had the high priest ceased with that sin-offering, Israel outside in the Camp, would never have had their sins typically removed.

Price Paid for Church Only.

So we see in the great antitype that Christ, on His ascension to God, appeared not for the world in general, but for us—the members of His body and household of faith generally. Does this mean that the world’s sins are not yet cancelled on the heavenly propitiatory? Yes, it surely does. How often the Apostles point out—“the whole world lieth in wickedness.” But in speaking of the “us” class, says—“Ye are bought with the precious blood of Christ”; “Who gave Himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.” (1 John 5:19; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Gal. 1:4.).

What a wonderful privilege it is to know God’s will in this matter, as again expressed by the Apostle—“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Tit. 2:13, 14). Let us note the particular point, that it is for this peculiar or specially called out people that Christ has thus far done so much. It may surprise some to know how many times this thought is brought out in the Scriptures but all can look up the references for themselves; two more texts will suffice here--“And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” (1 Cor. 15:17, 18). Why does the Apostle mention those only who are “fallen asleep in Christ”? Because the world of mankind, having had no application of the blood of Christ, were not in his mind at that time. Lastly, we refer to our Lord’s own words in the memorable prayer on the last night of His earthly sojourn—“I pray not for the world, but for them that Thou hast given Me.”

But, what about the world in general; did not “God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”? Yes, indeed, and let us look again at the typical picture, which we know was so arranged by the Lord, even to the smallest detail, that it might correctly prefigure all that was to take place in the antitypical or better sacrifices of this Gospel Age.

Secondary Sin-Offering in Type-The Lord’s Goat.

In Lev. 16, following the offering of the bullock by the high priest “for himself and his house,” we read—“Then shall he (the high priest) kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat.” The particular point to note about this secondary sin-offering is,

that it was offered “for the people”—on behalf of Israel generally, as a sin-offering for them—this goat being one of two especially provided by the congregation of the Children of Israel. With this type completed, the people of Israel generally, in addition to the priesthood and house of Levi, had their sins typically removed for the twelve months ahead, and the question is, how is this fulfilled in the antitype?

As we have seen that the typical priesthood and house of Levi typified the royal priesthood and household of faith of this Gospel Age, so Israel, out in the Camp—outside the Tabernacle and Court altogether—would picture the world of mankind. As Israel’s sin-offering was an animal separate from, yet following the one offered for the priests and house of Levi, does it follow in antitype that there is a secondary sin-offering following that of Jesus, whom we have seen has appeared in heaven for the antitypical priests and household of faith only? Yes, we believe this is very definitely taught in God’s Word, our verses in the 6th chapter of Romans being one of the references on this matter.

Secondary Sin-Offering in Antitype —The Church.

The bullock in the type pictured our Lord and as everything done with the bullock’s blood was done also with the goat’s it is very clear that the class being called out during this antitypical Atonement Day, and “planted in the likeness of Jesus’ death,” constitute (because “accepted in the beloved” and being members of Christ) the second part of the better sacrifices, which in due time shall take away the sins of the world, or rather shall release from Adamic condemnation all who desire to be reconciled to God. Those who are unappreciative of the gracious means whereby they may be delivered from sin and death must die the second death.

And what does it mean “to be planted together in the likeness of His death,”—the death of Christ. It surely means that as our Lord’s death was a sacrificial one, this must also be so, in the case of those members who follow His steps—the antitypical goat class which follows the anti-typical bullock.

Head and Body Dead for Sin.

In Isa. 53, we have the words—“Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” and this is undoubtedly the Apostle’s thought in Rom. 6:10, respecting our Lord —“In that He died, He died unto sin once,” or rather “for sin” as a sin-offering. Then, in the following verse, we have the members of Christ shown as the secondary anti-typical sin-offering—“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is very clear that the Apostle had this deeper thought in mind here. As our Lord had no sin to put away, he could not have meant that Christ died unto sin in this sense. No, it was as an offering for sin that Jesus died; so, if His followers are likewise to be reckoned dead, it must also be for sin, with them; they having previously had their sins covered with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, so that they could appear holy, and be acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ.

Does this imply that there must be a secondary anti-typical sprinkling of the heavenly mercy seat, or propitiatory, to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world? Yes, it surely does, but it will again be the valuable ransom price of Christ, that is at present in His members, that will clear the guilty world of mankind before the seat of Justice. Before that time every member of the Church of the firstborns, which includes the Bride and the Great Company, must have finished their course, the blood then being available for the sins of all natural people, and will be applied on their behalf. This secondary antitypical sprinkling cannot take place, then, until the close of this Gospel Age, and this point helps us greatly to determine where we are on the stream of time.

The Garments in Type and Antitype.

Turning again to Lev. 16, we find that after the two animals for the sin-offerings are killed and their blood sprinkled in the Most Holy, also the scapegoat dealt with, it says in verse 23—"And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments"; that is, his usual garments of glory and beauty. And what does this mean? Has this picture been fulfilled as yet?

In the type Aaron pictures our Lord, the High Priest of the new order of priests, the royal priesthood, and the linen garments were worn by the typical high priest during the sacrificing and sprinkling of the blood of the animals offered for sins, and until, the scapegoat is dealt with. This represents our Lord in His sacrificial robes during the whole of this Gospel Age and until the Great Company' has finished its course; and, as in the type, it was only after all the offerings were completed that the garments of glory and beauty were worn by the high priest, (the linen garments and those of glory and beauty could not be worn at the same time) so, it is fitting that Christ, in the antitype, could not be wearing the garments of the sacrificing High Priest and also those of glory and beauty that He will put on when His reign begins. We know that God's plan is working out in harmony with His Word, and we may be sure that this type at the close of Israel's Atonement Day was just as true as the typical sin-offerings themselves.

Therefore, dear friends, if we believe, and there seems not the least reason to doubt but everything to confirm, that there are some members of Christ still being sacrificed on earth, it must follow that our Lord is still clothed in the linen garments, as the sacrificing High Priest. This is implied very fully by the Apostle's reference to our Memorial—"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come."

Reign Follows Completion of Church's Sacrifice.

The garments of glory and beauty will be put on at a later time—when all the sacrificing is over—and will be worn not only by our Lord, the great High Priest, but also by the members of His Body, and then. His millennial reign will begin, but not before. There are no Scriptures that we know of to imply that our Lord is reigning in the heavens while He is sacrificing on earth; He must still be wearing the linen garments in antitype, on the other side of the vail, while one of His members is being sacrificed on earth. All the lines of chronology must not be permitted to interfere with the spiritual truths pertaining to the hidden mystery the taking out of the members of the Body of Christ who are counted in with our Lord and have part in the sin-offerings on behalf of the world of mankind.

Much more could be said respecting how the type of Israel's Atonement Day has been, and is being, fulfilled during this present Gospel Age, and another thought may be added here. It is generally understood that the incense offered with the blood of the bullock, in type, pictured the acceptableness of Christ our Head—His perfect offering on the heavenly propitiatory. But with the goat's blood no incense was used—the perfume would still remain in the Most Holy from the incense of the bullock's offering. So, in antitype the Lord's people have no acceptableness in themselves as offerings for sin, on behalf of the world of mankind, but, covered by the acceptableness of Christ they are privileged "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church"; that is, that God has predetermined that there should be this Body of Christ, to participate, first of all, in the sufferings of the Anointed, and later in the glory that is to follow. It will be seen, then, from this standpoint, how much depth there is in the many Scriptures pertaining to our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, being made conformable unto His death, and just how this really must be apart from, and in advance of, the world's release from sin altogether.

How favored are all those drawn of God during this acceptable time, accepting His call to sonship, having the privilege of being offered as the members of Christ, being broken with Him, drinking His blood, if so be, that proving faithful they may also be associated with Him in His throne, putting on the garments of glory and beauty and dispensing the blessings to all humanity during the Millennial reign in the age to come. “So Christ was once offered (tho Head at Jordan and the members at Pentecost, to be consummated at the close of this Age) to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin (without a sin-offering) unto salvation.” (Heb. 9:28).

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died for sin once: ‘out in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed for sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In Thy due time, our Heavenly Father, shall be known Thy gracious plan, which now is hid Except unto Thy saints alone.

O glorious day, when Thine
All-wisdom, justice, power and love,
The whole creation shall approve!
In His due time, O blessed Jesus, Thou shalt see
The travail of Thy soul, and shalt Be satisfied eternally;
Thine agony on Calvary—the price that Thou didst give,
Shall cause the dead again to live!

In God’s due time, O pilgrim on the “narrow way,”
Thy painful journey ended, darkest
Night shall turn to brightest day;
Thine every trial, then, thine every tear, shall prove a gem
To beautify thy diadem!

In His due time, O weary, groaning, sin-cursed Earth,
The Lord will wipe away thy tears,
And bring the promised “second birth”;
And there shall be no pain, nor any death in that blest day
When sin and sorrow flee away!

In His due time angelic choirs shall sing again In grander strain that heavenly message,
“Peace on earth, goodwill toward men!”
And every knee shall bow, and every loving heart confess
The Christ who comes to reign and bless!

For a complete and detailed explanation of the Sin-offerings and connected subjects the book mentioned below —“The Bible Teachings on the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin-Offering, Atonement” —is highly recommended to all.

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